

there. But let us face it, our side are rank amateurs compared to the consummate spenders we now have in charge.

For proof, we need look no further than the President's budget, the trillion dollar stimulus bill, this \$2.5 trillion health care bill, and the recent \$1.1 trillion omnibus spending bill with its double digit percentage increases over last year's spending. The deficit has grown exponentially this year alone.

The numbers themselves tell the story. The Treasury Department's Monthly Treasury Statement for November shows a deficit over the first two months of this new fiscal year alone of nearly \$300 billion. This 2-month deficit is greater than the full-year deficits in 2002, 2006, and 2007, which, by the way, are part of the past eight years that were supposed to represent the ultimate in reckless spending.

I am scared. All Americans should be frightened as well. We are on an unstable raft in the middle of an increasingly raging river. The currents are swirling around us and we are beginning to lose control of where we are going. Sharp rocks are starting to appear in the river that threaten our destruction.

Our alarm grows as we begin to hear a sound off in the distance that slowly gets louder as we head downstream on these increasingly wild rapids. The sound we hear is the cataract that represents our fall from the greatest nation in the history of mankind to that of a second-rate player on the world stage. Can you hear it? Can we find a way to turn this boat around before it is too late to avoid the fall? Many of my fellow Utahns can hear it and they are begging me to find a way to get us off this destructive course and get us back to safe waters.

The first step is to reject this debt limit increase. Let us cut up the credit card and stop this frightening spending spree before it takes us to the precipice.

It is a good thing we are recessing for a few days. The Members of this Senate need to go home and get a reality check from those who have sent us here. I hope that over the recess each of us will get a message, loud and clear, from our recession and debt-weary constituents that they are sick and tired of this fiscal irresponsibility. They are demanding change, and they will get it, one way or the other.

I hope that in the new year, we can consider these messages and find a new resolve to come together, to find the restraint that is simply lacking now, and to reverse this reckless spending so we do not send our country down the river.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader is recognized.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the minority leader and I have some things to

discuss, so I ask unanimous consent that we recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:35 a.m., recessed until 8:26 a.m., and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. CANTWELL).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, during the consideration of the health care bill, one of my primary concerns has been ensuring that the longstanding Hyde amendment would be incorporated into the bill. I have strongly held views on the subject, and I fought hard to prevent tax dollars from being used to subsidize abortions.

I was pleased that the House included strong abortion provisions in its health care bill in the form of the Stupak amendment. I modified this language to meet the Senate bill and offered the Nelson-Hatch-Casey amendment to prohibit Federal funding of abortion, and I was disappointed to see that amendment was tabled by a vote of 54 to 45.

I knew then that the underlying bill did not adequately prohibit Federal funding of abortion and, consequently, I would not be able to support it. So I began to look for other language to accomplish the goal that no public funds should cover abortion in the new health care bill. After long days of negotiations, I believe we came up with a true compromise that stays faithful to my principles.

I want to be clear, I stuck to my guns and stood for my pro-life principles. I did not look for weaker language. I looked for clearer language, and my goal stayed the same: to maintain the standard that we have had in Federal law since the mid-1970s.

While I respect the opinion of the Senator from Kansas, I have to respectfully disagree. The Senate language fully upholds the Hyde principle like the language in the House bill. The wording may be different, but the principle is, in fact, upheld.

Under the health care bill, if you cannot afford insurance, you will receive Federal assistance to help pay for a private health care plan. The Stupak language prohibits that Federal assistance from paying for insurance that covers abortions. If you like a plan that covers abortion, you must purchase a rider or an endorsement to your plan with your own funds. You could do that as well by writing just one check to the insurer. For that you get a separate piece of paper addressing abortion.

The Senate language, with my added compromise, also prohibits Federal funds from paying for private insurance that covers abortion. The only difference is that in the Senate bill, if you are receiving Federal assistance to buy insurance, and if that plan has any

abortion coverage, the insurance company must bill you separately, and you must pay separately from your own personal funds—perhaps a credit card transaction, your separate personal check, or automatic withdrawal from your bank account—for that abortion coverage.

Now, let me say that again. You have to write two checks: one for the basic policy and one for the additional coverage for abortion. The latter has to be entirely from personal funds.

So under both the Stupak and the new Senate language, no Federal funds can be used to pay for a plan that covers abortion, and if you choose to purchase abortion coverage—if it is available—you must pay out of your own pocket.

Furthermore, the Senate language allows States the right to ban public and private insurance from supplying abortion coverage. Already, 12 States ban abortion coverage on public plans and 5 States ban abortion coverage on both private and public plans. So, in short, the Senate bill ensures, once again, no Federal funds would be used for abortion.

I would like to note that the Senate bill goes beyond Stupak in two life-promoting ways. One, it adds funding to support pregnant and parenting teens and women and, two, it expands the adoption tax credit to help adoptive parents with the considerable expense of adoption by making that credit a refundable tax credit. This means many potential parents who lack the regular resources to adopt will now be in a better position to do so.

The Senate bill also contains the same strong conscience protections included in the Stupak language. We tried winning approval for the Nelson-Hatch-Casey abortion language in the Senate, but we were unsuccessful. However, we did not give up. I know people have very strong feelings about the issue of abortion, and I respect those who disagree with my position, but I could not support health reform that did not maintain the 30-year standard barring public funding of abortion. I did not compromise my pro-life principles; we just found different wording, different language, and both will work. I believe people will see that no public funding will go to abortion.

In addition, my provision empowers the States to pass laws banning the sale of insurance that covers abortion. We make it clear that this new law, this new bill does not in any way preempt the rights of States to be able to continue to make that ban in the decisions they might make legislatively, and we want to make certain there is no doubt but that this bill has no preemption of the States rights.

Despite what some partisans and talk show hosts say in their scare tactics, the conscience clause remains. Also, despite what those same people and even some of my colleagues have said, the bottom line is that the Senate health care bill will not allow taxpayer money to pay for abortion, period.